



ask SHIP

Q: My doctor recently told me I would benefit from using a walker to get around. I have Medicare. Will Medicare pay for it, and where do I get one?

A: Medicare has changed the way they pay for Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Medicare has started a new Competitive Bidding Program in many areas of the country, including Indiana.

This program has changed the amount Medicare pays suppliers for certain durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (sometimes called DMEPOS). It also changes who can supply these items to be covered by Medicare.

Under this program, suppliers submit bids to provide certain medical equipment and supplies. Medicare uses these bids to set the amount it pays for those equipment and supplies.

Contracts are awarded to the Medicare suppliers who offer the best price. Contract suppliers must agree to accept Medicare assignment on all claims for bid items and will be paid the bid price amount.

The goal of the Competitive Bidding Program is to:

- Help you and Medicare save money
- Ensure that you have access to quality medical equipment, supplies, and services from suppliers you can trust
- Help limit fraud and abuse in the Medicare Program

If you have other insurance that pays before Medicare, it may require you to use a supplier that isn't a contract supplier.

So, what happens when you are traveling and need DME supplies?

The chart below explains your options while traveling.

To find DME suppliers in your area, go to

www.medicare.gov/supplierdirectory to search by zip code or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Medicare may make a secondary payment to that supplier. The supplier must meet Medicare enrollment standards and be eligible to get secondary payments. For more information, check with your benefits administrator, insurer, or your plan provider.

If you have any questions about DME, the Competitive Bidding Program, or any other Medicare related issues, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD, or online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

If you live permanently in...	And travel to...	You may go to...
An area participating in the program	An area participating in the program	A Medicare contract supplier for the area you traveled to for items included in the program.
An area participating in the program	An area not participating in the program	Any Medicare-approved supplier
An area not participating in the program	An area participating in the program	A Medicare contract supplier for the area you traveled to for items included in the program.
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SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance.